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REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-20 are pending in the application. Claims 19 and 20 have been amended to overcome the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, in the manner suggested by the Examiner. Claims 1, 3, 4, and 6 have been amended to overcome claim objections. The amendments are fully supported by the specification as originally filed.

Claims 1, 3-6, and 18-20 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,747,921 to Wakabayashi et al. (hereinafter "Wakabayashi").

Wakabayashi does not teach or suggest a tilt correction method or an objective lens driving device including a plurality of elastic supporting members each having at least one bent portion, where tilt of a movable portion is corrected by varying expansion/contraction amounts of the bent portions.

Wakabayashi is directed to an apparatus for driving an objective lens, including a movable body 50 supported by four wires 8a to 8d so as to be elastically movable in a focus direction F and a tracking direction T with respect to a base 51 (see column 8, lines 6-9). The wires 8a to 8d are attached to movable portions 9a to 9d of a metal supporting plate 9 (see column 7, lines 28-30). As shown in FIG. 5, during upward movement of the movable body 50, the movable body 50 tries to tilt in the direction N1, while forces P1 and P2 act on each of the wires 8a, 8c and 8b, 8d (see column 10, lines 47-58). The movable portions 9a and 9c pivot in the direction M1, and the movable portions 9b and 9d pivot in the direction M2, which causes the movable body 50 to pivot in the direction N2, thereby counteracting tilt in the direction N1 and, as a result, preventing the movable body 50 from tilting (see column 10, line 58 to column 11, line 4).

In the Office Action, the Examiner alleged that the four wires 8a to 8d and the movable portions 9a to 9d together correspond to the "elastic supporting members" recited in claims 1, 3, and 4 (see Office Action, page 3, 2nd paragraph and page 5, "Response to Arguments").

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In the Amendment dated September 3, 2004, Applicants explained differences between the Applicants' claimed invention and the Mohri reference, which discloses an apparatus similar to Wakabayashi, where both Mohri and Wakabayashi are commonly owned by Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd.

In Wakabayashi, the wires 8a to 8d and the movable portions 9a to 9d are separate elements. For example, as described in column 7, lines 28-32 of Wakabayashi, the wires 8a to 8d are soldered to junction points 9k to 9n of the movable portions 9a to 9d, respectively. In other words, one end of each wire is perpendicular to the supporting plate 9, so this arrangement does not constitute "at least one bent portion". In Wakabayashi, none of the wires 8a to 8d includes a bent portion, and therefore Wakabayashi is not capable of correcting tilt in the manner recited in claims 1, 3, and 4.

As shown in FIG. 5, the movable portions 9a and 9c pivot around a pivot axis S1, and the movable portions 9b and 9d pivot around a pivot axis S2. The movable portions 9a to 9d do not constitute "at least one bent portion" of an elastic supporting member because they are merely straight movable portions that pivot around respective pivot axes.

In contrast, according to the Applicants' claimed invention, the elastic supporting member 3 itself forms at least one bent portion 3c bent approximately in the optical axis or focus direction (see, e.g., specification at page 20, lines 7-12). As a result, the elastic supporting member 3 acts to offset tilt, whereby the tilt of movable portion 13 in a tangential direction Ta can be minimized (see specification at page 23, lines 3-7; FIG. 11). Such an arrangement is neither taught nor suggested by Wakabayashi.

For at least the reasons discussed above, the Wakabayashi reference does not anticipate or otherwise render obvious the Applicants' claimed invention.

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It is believed that the claims are in condition for immediate allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

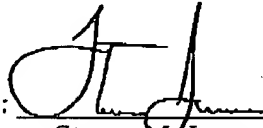
Applicants believe that additional fees are not required for consideration of the within response. However, if for any reason a fee is required or credit is owed for any excess fee paid, the Commissioner is hereby authorized and requested to charge Deposit Account No. 04-1105.

Respectfully submitted,

EDWARDS & ANGELL, LLP

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